

PROSECUTION COPS OUT

TUESDAY 26th Oct, turned out to be a confusing but enjoyable day. At Wells St Magistrates Court 14 of the Oxford St 48 were up to face charges of threatening behaviour or obstruction. Waiting outside the court room was a bit nerve-racking, as the entire force of SPG Unit 4 had turned up to give 'evidence' in the cases. For some of us the last meeting with these 'officers' had not been exactly amicable. If looks could kill casualties on both sides would have been extensive. However, for once being busted by the SPG turned out to be an advantage. What with a large demonstration by Scottish mine, rail and steelworkers taking place that day and a large contingent of Greenham Common Peace Campers due up at Marylebone the Yard's finest were urgently required elsewhere. This led to an intense round of pleabargaining, the smell of deals being made everywhere. The basic offer was this; agree to be bound-over to be of good behaviour (An archaic provision of English Law where even if you are not guilty you can receive a form of suspended sentence enforceable if you offend again within a year. In one case last year two *prosecution witnesses* were 'bound-over' by a magistrate) and the prosecution would offer no evidence and the charges would be dismissed. 10 of the defendants accepted the offer, in some cases quite rightly as the possibility of conviction and large sentences were high. Four defendants refused and demanded to be proved totally innocent. This meant that a large group of SPG still had to stay behind as witnesses, defeating the prosecution's purpose of getting the whole thing over with quickly.

Eventually the 19 accepting the deal were brought into court, given a lecture by the woman magistrate and had their charges dismissed but given the 'bind-overs'.

The first full case began. This concerned an elderly gentleman. He was accused of obstructing an officer making an arrest. The prosecution seemed a bit reluctant to go ahead with the case and promptly explained why. The man, a doctor, turned out to be an expert on Police/community relations who had even lectured at the Police College at Bramshill! Obviously the arrest was a tragic mistake, the doctor was a man of impeccable character, rightly concerned with what he saw happening,

blah, blah, blah. . . Case dismissed and he even got £50 costs against the Police.

The next case concerned a more obvious 'marcher', as far as the police were concerned. Up trots a cop, Baldwin by name, moron by nature who proceeds to give 'evidence'. Nothing much different from the usual run of evidence given so far in these cases. A catalogue of horror, fear, dastardly behaviour, ruin of society, etc etc.

On hearing this evidence the magistrate was concerned. If all the others had not had evidence offered against them why was this young man having a full case heard? The prosecution stuttered and hummed, finally revealing that the deal had been offered but refused, what could he do? The magistrate asked the defendant to explain. In a calm, determined manner he replied that as he was innocent he wanted it proved in court on the evidence and that he considered accepting the deal as a form of admission of guilt. This statement had an obvious effect on the magistrate. The next cop started off getting caught out in a lie. He said he had made notes about the arrest with the first officer at the same time. However the first cop had said he made the notes alone, the second cop, Hugh Jones, 1170 C.O., had only looked them over and signed them later. Much embarrassment on the prosecutor's face. Trying to brush it off as a 'technicality'. The cop was told to give evidence without reference to notes but admitted he had just read them before the case started. Naturally his 'evidence' was identical to the first cop's. Following the defence case, ably put with good witnesses who resisted the prosecution's attempts to manufacture an 'anarchist' plot (whenever the evidence gets thin, the police case dodgy up pops the 'anarchist' dimension) the magistrate didn't waste any time, case dismissed.

The next case was a weird one. It involved a Labour Party member, a teacher from Sheffield, who had been arrested while intervening in a struggle between a cop and several marchers. The cop had been arresting one person, and several others were going to his aid. The teacher intervened to 'prevent more violence' but got himself busted instead. Whilst having no sympathy with those who aid the police in arresting comrades the irony of the situ-

ation was not lost on us, so when the case was dismissed we were quite pleased for him. The last case, involving a Peace News reporter arrested for obstruction was adjourned to January through lack of time.

So, with only a few cases to go, the Oxford St 48 are doing well. It would be wrong to end without reflecting upon the awareness of magistrates concerning present day society. In keeping with the tradition established by a previous magistrate handling '48' cases, this one had us laughing with her comments. On being told that a lot of young people wore black at 'pop concerts' she said 'Black's a funny colour to wear. . . I thought they liked bright colours. . . psychedelic. . . I thought that was "with it"'. The best line however was 'If you want to preserve democracy. . . you must have good manners while demonstrating, mustn't you?'

BRIQUE LEFLIC



THE RULING CASTE

Reports Wales

HERE is a mental exercise for you. Imagine a society with apparent inequalities. Apply a series of measures which will further penalise those at the bottom. Adopt an official ideology based on competition and acquired privilege. Would this be a stable system?

If you answered 'yes' go back to 'go' (we offer no £200). If you answered 'no', how would you prevent collapse? Here are some suggestions. Try an incentive scheme. 'You have already won a prize. You are eligible to enter our grand draw.' Your prize turns out to be a booklet of quotations from Dickens, but it is a *prize*, and somebody WINS. Deck it out with tinsel. Provide a few distractions, royal romance, royal naughtiness, Star Wars on TV. (How reassuring, there's a secret force underlying everything, tapped by an elite conspiracy for our benefit.) Even better, Star Wars over the South Atlantic.

There might still be some problems. The conventional answer is to appoint a series of monitors, prefects or whatever. Give them a few privileges, extra rations, a bit of status, a nice uniform.

In the last three and a half years the police have had the following pay rises, early 1979: 40%, late 1979: 13.5%, 1980: 21.3%, 1981: 13.2%, 1982: 10.3% (with a bit of fudging on pensions). Plus a rent subsidy or free house, estimated to be worth around £2,000. Overtime is available. Money is also available for new equipment.

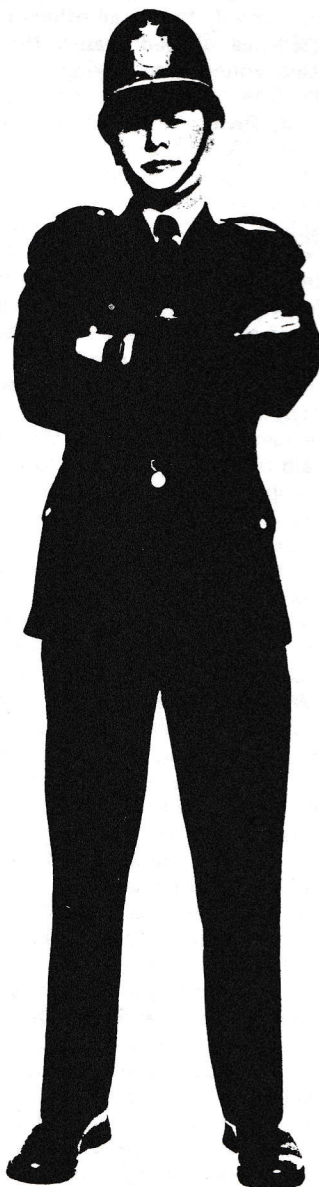
A problem for rulers who create elite guards is that they become power brokers. The Praetorian Guards were a classical example. The Mamelukes in Egypt actually became the ruling caste. The police in this country have been becoming more stridently involved in public life. Chief Constables have made blatant political demands, on their path to careers selling tyres or memoirs (£120,000 seems to be the going rate, supplements the £24,000 index linked pension). Or how about a lectureship and Liberal candidatureship? At a less exalted level, a job with a security firm.

Now, to add insult to injury, its ingratitude that really hurts, members of the Police Federation have heckled the Home Secretary and their new Metropolitan Commissioner. Commendable indeed, but not quite the thing in context. Other parts of the judicial establishment also feel this new confidence and go in for a bit of muscle flexing. Overcrowded prisons are becoming an embarrassment, please cut sentences was the plea — totally ignored, according to the new criminal statistics.

This is not to claim that there is a coup brewing in the Police Federation (though

guesses could be made about which side would be taken in any confrontation). The point is that if you set people up in privileged positions they develop a taste for it. They start to feel that their opinion is important, as a right. If these people also happen to be paramilitary phalanxes the implications are obvious. In times of social unrest, there is an attempt to clamp down, to bury the disturbance, or, finally, just to keep the bastards in order. The police have been chosen to illustrate this because they happen to be the Front Line.

Criticism of the police can be unpopular, not least with the police themselves. It is sometimes suggested that the only motive for such criticism is to discredit the police. To stir anarchy and chaos. Damn right. DP



WELSH CONSPIRACY TRIAL

FOLLOWING our article in FREEDOM on the 11th September (Vol 43 No 18) concerning the arrest of 6 Welsh republicans in connection with explosives charges, one of the accused, Dafydd Burns, has been released after the charge against him was dropped. Charged with intent to cause an explosion at an Army recruitment office in Pontypridd, there was insufficient evidence to proceed with the case against him. He had been on remand for the past 12 weeks.

Another defendant, Adrian Stone, was granted bail when the major charge against him was dropped, that is, a charge of intent to cause an explosion at British Steel headquarters in Cardiff. But two other charges still remain, one of possession of explosive substances and one of conspiracy to damage property. From the past experience provided by the Persons Unknown trial we know what tenuous evidence these can turn out to be based upon.

A protest demonstration was held outside Cardiff Magistrates Court where the hearings were taking place in an attempt to publicise the fact that these are political trials based on the infamous conspiracy laws. Banners called for the release of all the defendants some of whom have been held in custody for up to 23 weeks without trial.

Dafydd Ladd (also one of the Persons Unknown defendants) appeared and was remanded in custody accused of two explosives charges and two of using a false name.

The others are charged with conspiracy to damage property and intent to cause explosions. It's the same old routine. The establishment may never learn, but they are still very dangerous.

Committal proceedings for the charges will go ahead on November 18th.

Greece

Taken from Mescaleros Vol 1 No 2.

FIVE well known comrades from Athens were charged with violence against the authorities, theft, assault etc. The charges stemmed from an incident at Athens University in January 1982. During an anarchist meeting there, following the repression of anarchos squatters in

Athens, Thessalonika and Heraklion, Crete, an agent provocateur was discovered in the crowd. He tried to escape, threatening those around him with a long knife. He was disarmed after a short struggle. Upon questioning he claimed that he was a petty thief that the police were using to infiltrate the meeting and to spy on the movements of the anarchos/autonomists in Athens, as well as to provoke confrontations by smashing shop windows etc during demonstrations. He carried an ID card that named him as Agelos Dimtropoulos, jobless. Those who caught him made him sign a document saying 'I am a cop and a heroin dealer'. Then they photographed him for the next day's papers whilst he held his knife. After a beating he was thrown out of the building.

Soon after this the building was surrounded by hundreds of uniformed and plain clothes police. It was assumed that they would attempt to storm the building. However after about three hours they left.

It was later discovered that the agent provocateur was not just a poor petty thief but an undercover policeman, Agelos Karpis, using false papers. In other words the police themselves had 'broken the law' by infringing the inviolability of the university and forgery.

Now after 10 months five comrades are being charged with this action. To top it all the five people 'named' by this undercover agent were not even in the meeting at the time.

THREE prisoners in Alikarnasos prison, Kornelios Louloudis, Michalis Kanetos and F Anagnostopoulos are on hunger/thirst strike. They have reported a number of violent and high-handed acts against them by the prison authorities:

1. A prisoner's complaint against his torturers has 'disappeared'.

2. Forced haircuts, during which the guards used violence.

3. Thousands of fascist/sexist books are in the prison library but there is a total prohibition of all 'political' issues received from outside friends.

4. The assistant commissioner of the prison said on October 2nd: 'maybe the Greek constitution says that you are human beings, but our prison law is above it'.

5. It was said to prisoners that 'this prison is a special one and so it has special laws and regulations, those of the King (...) and of Papadoulos'. (Greek dictator 1967 - 73).

6. Against all regulations they are locked in their cells 24 hours a day without water and toilet.

3

THE Greek edition of W Pawell's book *The Anarchist Cookbook* has been seized by the police and the Athens District Attorney is prosecuting its translator and editor G Karabellas with printing material likely to spread hard-drugs use, terrorist actions, manufacture of explosives etc.

This book, in its original American edition, was in 1978 the main evidence against Phillipos and Sophia Kyritses who were subsequently sentenced to 8 and 5 years imprisonment respectively.

Greek anarchists find it very suspicious that this book has been published in Greece during this particularly difficult period for anti authoritarians in Greece, when the confusion and distortion of anarchist ideas is more widespread than ever. Some comrades calling themselves 'Greek Initiative for an Anarchist Federation' have sent a leaflet to newspapers and magazines describing the book as 'fascist and provocative'. In their leaflet they write: 'Seeing all the bad results that this book caused a decade ago in its native country - the US, we can understand in advance what this shameful, anti-anarchist, fascist and clearly provocative book will cause in the Greek situation. Here the confusion, the ignorance and the misunderstanding about what the fuck anarchism means can make us sure that some anarchoid youths hoping to become "men" and "heroes" will find their clumsy bombs blowing up in their own hands or will shoot heroin (plentiful in Greece) into their body with the hope that in this way they will be "revolutionaries" ...'

Italy

THINKING AND LIVING ANARCHY

Conference on Errico Malatesta on the 50th Anniversary of his death.
Milan 24 - 25 - 26 September 1982.

HUNDREDS of people took part in the conference on Errico Malatesta, organised by the 'Centro Studi Libertari 'Pinelli'. There were militants and anarchist sympathisers from all over Italy and also from abroad (Switzerland, France, Spain, Portugal, USA etc.) But above all, an unusual and positive aspect, many people not normally 'involved'. Thanks also to the mass-media coverage received. They didn't ignore the event, contrary to what usually happens to activities including cultural ones organised by anarchists.

Amongst the comrades present, some old ones; we remember the nonogenarian Maria Rossi (widow of Carlo Molaschi) who fought in the 1936 Spanish Revolution as did Vindice Rabitti, some from abroad like Domenico Girelli (from Paris) and gentile Merli (Geneva). This last one took part in the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the historic congress sixty years ago, together with Errico Malatesta. On that occasion, Malatesta, escaping from the tight police controls, managed to go abroad for the last time.

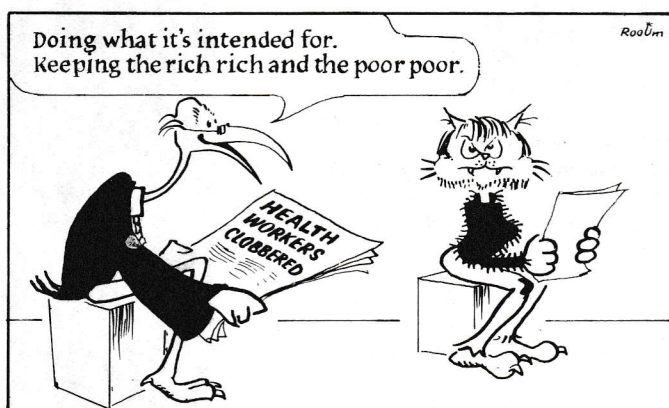
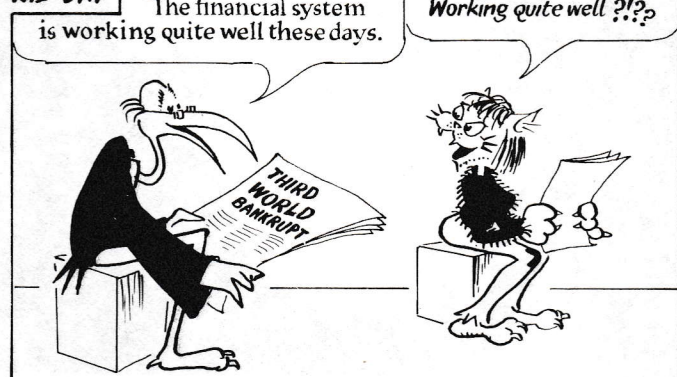
In the foyer the conference ran a bookshop service for the full three days, managed by Editrice A and Utopia Bookshop, alongside which were the tables of many small groups and comrades who'd brought their own editorial material. Very much appreciated was the photographic exhibition and the biographical slide show run by the Milanese comrades of Pointa, both centred on the extremely adventurous life of Malatesta.

Briefly, the 30 or so speeches and lectures were well received and led to lively debate.

On the Sunday afternoon a film was shown from the archives of the Gobetti Institute of Turin, during which could be seen a piece of about one minute shot

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WILDCAT



The 'accidental' deaths of anarchists

THE 'suicides', while in custody, of two young anarchists, have taken place in recent months in England and in Greece. Both were hung.

This week an inquest is being held into the death of Jimmy Heather-Hayes, a teenager from Teddington, who was found dead in his cell in Ashford Remand Centre. Two days after appearing at the Old Bailey charged with throwing two petrol bombs over the counter of the local police station last July he was found hanging in his cell.

'This disposes of the case' commented an Old Bailey judge; quite conveniently it appears. His parents and friends, though, aren't convinced that this death, one more in a long line of deaths in police custody, is as straightforward as it appears to be for the establishment. It is just very easy for this sort of thing to happen. The inquest doesn't hold out much hope of bringing out the truth, judging by past experience: it is after all part of the same judicial machinery.

Demonstrations by his friends on July 16th resulted in a number of police provoked arrests and a heavy police presence was felt at his funeral a week later.

And from Athens a report that on 16th September 1982 a young comrade, Makis Vradis was found hanged in the Port authorities detention centre in Eraklion in Crete. The report says Makis had moved to Crete with his brother in order to find work, because in Athens harassment by the police prevented them from finding work for more than 2 days at a time. Makis and his brother were both arrested for theft on their way to Crete and when

they arrived they were locked in separate cells in the detention centre of the port authorities. His brother saw Makis again only after he was dead. The authorities talked of suicide but there are many things in this 'yet one more death of an anarchist' which make us believe that this official explanation is not true. The mother and brother of M Vradis stated that he was murdered, and a leaflet distributed by his friends during his funeral in Vyronas cemetery in Athens (18/9/82) said: 'There are some kids that are gonna cry for Makis ... the cops are responsible

for his death, "law abiding" citizens and all those who promote and organise systems and situations to exterminate day by day a large but isolated section of youth.'

It ends: '...But the time will also come for all those murderers that squeeze the best years of our lives into their prisons and detention centres; and we can promise them that they will all be punished.'

We can add that this also goes for the police and prison authorities involved in the death of Jimmy Heather-Hayes.

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Italy

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in Savona on the first of May 1920. That day there was a massive proletarian demonstration with a public speech by Malatesta, amongst those present were the port workers of Genova who organised a train for the event. The film shows the Genovese train (on which Malatesta travelled) and also a few seconds of Malatesta's speech. The showing of this unique piece of film was emotionally relieved.

Taken from *Rivista Anarchica*
(October 1982)



Heather-Hayes

AROUND the 3rd March 1982, there occurred a petrol bomb attack on the Police Station in Teddington, Middlesex. A few days later, Jim Heather-Hayes was charged with arson and intent to endanger life.

On the 7th July 1982, Jim was dead.

'Arson youth found hanged in cell' — 'cell boy hanged' — 'Bomb boy is found hanged' ran the headlines in all the papers — sadly predictable and sensational

Jim, 18 years old, committed suicide at Ashford Remand Centre. The previous day at the Old Bailey, he had pleaded guilty to the charges and had been further remanded for urgent psychiatric reports before sentencing.

Jim had been held in custody since the 5th March and although he had repeatedly applied for bail, it had been constantly refused.

On the 22nd May, 1982, Jim, described in the papers as a local hero, a revolutionary, a 'boaster turned blaster' a punk rocker and a glue sniffer, wrote the following, inside the remand centre:-

I don't want no part
Of your death or glory.
I don't want to rot
Under your wooden crosses
I aint going to die
For you fat rich bosses.
I don't want a letter
Saying I died a hero
I don't want a wreath,
It's just a colourful zero.
I don't want no tales
Of patriotic deeds,
'Cos its off our deaths
That your system feeds.

This poem is not in the least consistent with the press coverage subsequent to Jim's death which portrayed him as an unintelligent, unfeeling and somewhat unbalanced yob, who attached no meaning to his actions and perceived little or nothing about his society and environment.

After all it is safe to dismiss an attack which is mindless and meaningless, but when articulate people start throwing bombs, in full knowledge of what they are doing, a severe threat is posed to the State.

Jim believed in Anarchy and Peace. His beliefs were deeply felt, intense and sincere. His own personal motto was so cliché as to be rendered laughable — 'Death or Glory', but Jim believed it far more deeply than anyone around him realized at the time.

It is morally repugnant, verging on absurd that we exist in a society where it takes such violent and tragic actions merely to arouse people into asking questions or even thinking against the State.

Jim's life and death demonstrate an important fact which the State constantly and relentlessly is trying to repress — there are people living in this society who despise both this state and its shoddy Marxist alternative, people who believe in Anarchy, Peace and Freedom, who are seeking out new values. Jim sought out new values

fervently and although he provides no answer, his observations are shocking in their deep and intense perception of life.

NUCLEAR MIND

You say it in the name of freedom,
You accept a Pandora's box
Of utter destruction, death and waste,
A frenzy of killing for your delight.
People burn, people die
But its never you.
You sit under your roof
Steel and concrete
As cold and as hard
As your grey shapeless heart.

I have no wish to die for you.
Your smooth-tongued words of hate

Betray us to a fiery scourge
Monsoons of death and rot.
I have no wish
To putrify in heat
I have no wish
To be a part of you.

Cruise and Trident,
MX and SS
Polaris and megaton
Warhead and overkill
Fall-out and fireball
Pretty words for your
Sick diseased minds.

Jim Heather-Hayes.

FRAN HEATHER-HAYES

In brief

THE probation workers annual conference has overwhelmingly rejected the government's plan for a curfew for young offenders. This makes the proposals virtually unworkable as social workers, the only other profession who could operate them have already voted their rejection.

SOUTH American Notes ... More than 34,000 people have been arrested in Peru under a two month old state of emergency. When giving the figures, as it lifted the emergency regulations in one province, the government said that terrorism had been cut by nearly 80%.

Cynicism is sometimes misplaced. A military government has fulfilled its promises and stood down in a restoration of democracy. The military authorities in Bolivia had overridden the results of three elections. They finally took over completely two years ago. In the meantime they ran the country as a large racket, notably in the cocaine trade. Now, the new left (ish) regime has begun a purge of senior civil servants and military officers.

Over 400 bodies, said to be of people who disappeared after the 1976 military coup in Argentina, have been found in a cemetery near the main barracks at Buenos Aires.

THE government is getting on with its plans to avoid another embarrassment like Operation Hard Rock. This was supposed to be a Civil Defence Exercise, but it was somewhat undermined when 20 out of 54 local authorities declared themselves to be nuclear free zones and became uncooperative. A responsible government does not allow itself to be sidetracked by such nonsense, so William Whitelaw, Home Secretary, immediately announced that he would change the regulations and whip them into line. The outlines of the new regulations have been given ... 'Local authorities will be required, as directed by the Secretary of

State, to arrange the peacetime training and exercising of staff and volunteers in civil defence.' There is also provision for placing employees of local authorities 'employed for purposes other than civil defence purposes ... under a duty to comply with requirements as to training for and taking part in any form of civil defence ...'

THE world's stockpile of nuclear weapons now totals 50,000 devices, equivalent to more than 1 million times the explosive power of the Hiroshima bomb. This means that every person on Earth has the equivalent of 3½ tonnes of TNT for their very own. So it's OK, they don't have to blow us up, they can just drop them and squash us.

AN unidentified assailant has destroyed West Germany's most efficient speed trap with about 30 shots at two automatic radar cameras over the autobahn in Hesse. Police assume that it was an enraged motorist.

PRESIDENT Zia ul-Haq continues his more-islamic-than-thou campaign to outdo Iran. His new committee has recommended the death penalty for prostitution, a ban on ballroom dancing, watchdog committees to safeguard public morals, discouragement of jewellery and embroidery and pre-admission tests in Islamic ideology for college and university students. The committee has also called for 'storm action' against shops which sell obscene literature. Tangible results in social reform are expected within a year.

Meanwhile, in Iran, another nice piece of rhetoric has appeared in an attack on ex-prime minister Bazargan. He is berated as a pseudo intellectual 'a donkey with a load of books on his back' acting as a 'mouthpiece for Western Imperialism' which will 'drag him towards hellfire'.

IT'S bad enough these liberals calling themselves 'libertarians', now their partners, the Social Democrats, are getting in on the act. At their nice, moderate, conference one of these centrist jellies invoked Bakunin and Kropotkin, in support of a 'natural society'.

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IN SUPPORT OF
SIMON LOS

Dear FREEDOM,
You may be interested to hear about some of the activity in support of Simon Los on the anniversary of his imprisonment. The 'fun and games brigade' spent the afternoon of Thursday 21st October dropping bundles of leaflets concerning the imprisonment, from Westminster Cathedral tower. The leaflets fluttered down like confetti all over the area and the wind carried some gently along Victoria St towards Scotland Yard. It cost 30p to get to the top of the tower but it was well worth the fun. A much better job could be made of this sort of thing and a mental list is being made of towers and tall buildings that could be used in future for scattering leaflets over wide areas, either throwing bundles or leaving loose piles to be gradually carried off by the wind.

General Ned Ludd and Captain Swing of the Sussex Anarchist Society asked us in their letter of 2nd October to have a 'chat' with Justice-Mars-Jones. Phoning the number given produced some strange results, whoever it was at the other end of the phone it definitely wasn't the Judge.

Could the General and Captain tell us whatever happened to the Paper 'Ludd & Swing', we are very curious as it seems to have ceased publication.

Yours,
PAUL PETARD

ABORTION AND THE
MORALITY MAFIA

In Ireland, especially in Dublin, we have what I rudely call the Morality Mafia. A collection of elderly spinsters and men chiefly, who are working a terrific pressure group to get abortion banned by the Constitution. Our deplorable Taoiseach Charles Haughey, is yielding to them. It is the thin edge of the wedge. Next they will insist upon contraception being banned also. Now I hold no rule can be absolute. If a woman is going to have her health ruined, mentally or physically, by another baby, then she must have an abortion. Likewise if a woman or worse still, a child of twelve, is raped, she should be taken to the doctor the next day and have either 'the morning after' pill or a D and C at the doctor's discretion.

Alas we have both doctors and chemists who belong to the Morality Mafia and will not sell contraceptives, though in order to get them now one has to have a doctor's prescription and no matter how poor you are you must pay. Deep in the

country there are no Family Planning Clinics and the people are at the mercy of their doctor and chemist. These people are pro-egg rather than pro-life as they call themselves, as they insist that human life begins the second an ovum is fertilised long before nidification has taken place. I pointed out that if they believed that then their God was the greatest abortionist of the lot as literally billions of fertilised ova are passed every month without the woman being aware of it. This led to sheaves of violent anonymous letters! They are so much holier than the rest of us. Mind you I do think sexual relations before marriage are a mug's game as no contraceptive is 100% reliable, and the man can just walk away and the woman is left carrying the baby, and is rejected in Ireland by the parents. They (the Morality Mafia) advocate what they call the 'Natural way' of contraception. The collective noun for couples that use this method is Parents.

Our lovely government has also ordained that over 900 of the articles which in the past the holders of medical cards got free on prescription from their doctors must now be paid for; ie bandages, ordinary creams and powders for eczema, vitamin pills and iron for pregnant women etc etc. It is of course the government's way of contraception. Kill off as many poor people as you can, especially the old, and then our population will be reduced!

'God in his mercy look down on Belfast' we used to say, but now it is all Ireland.

Has anyone got a really remote island in Antarctica which they will sell me very cheaply (say IOP) and then I will transport Thatcher, Haughey, Begin and Paisley to it and leave them to get on with it! It is a glorious fantasy and I have no doubt you will be able to add to the inhabitants.

HILARY BOYLE

Dublin

With the publication of the three subsequent letters we wish to draw correspondence on this subject to a close.....for the time being.

EDS

THE POWER OF
ANARCHISTS

Dear FREEDOM,
What have Lanty's attitudes got to do with anarchism? Not a lot! So Lanty (as an anarchist?) believes that because human beings are a more intelligent species, we have the right to abuse, persecute and kill other species.

As an anarchist I believe that each individual should have no power over any life, but their own.

Just imagine your reaction if another

form of life more intelligent than we, came here and used us just as they wished. How would you feel if you were enslaved for experimentation, tortured for 'sport', even eaten.

There is no justification for turning life into consumer goods. In theory no person need starve, if land was not used for meat factories, farms or for growing food for animals in those places. Animal flesh is much more expensive (in more ways than one) than alternative foods.

Lanty, your action is murderous, you are both the oppressor and the oppressed. Speciesism isn't anarchism.

From,
GUINEA PIG OF WAYWARD WORKS,
In Solidarity with ALF.

ANIMALS AND
VEGETABLES

Dear friends,
I am extremely pissed off with the reactionary sentiments expressed in Lanty's letter ALF and @ of 2 October 1982. The idea that Cumbria is only useful as a fattening ground for animals is ridiculous. I don't know — but presume potatoes and oats could be grown (as in Scotland) and if not, what about a renewable energy source — trees. Or perhaps Lanty is more into nuclear power? Britain could far more easily become self sufficient by quitting animal farming altogether. Pulses needn't be imported — haricots, field beans, lima beans, peas, high protein Throws beans and even soya can be and are being grown successfully in this climate. Animal farming requires 5 — 8 times as much land as vegetable farming to produce the same amount of usable protein. Not to mention the amount of suffering animal farming can, and usually does, cause. So, we needn't use the cold uplands for anything but tree growing and nature conservation.

Lanty seems to take a superior stance towards other animals as though humans are somehow the elite guardians of the animal kingdom (biblical overtones here). Is this because we know how to hate, preach, enslave, imprison, torture, build guns, spacecraft, submarines and various weapons capable of destroying the planet? Because there's not much else we do that animals don't. Lanty describes their killing of rabbits, hares, pigeons, foxes, minks etc as 'sport' (sometimes) as well as humane and ecologically sound. Surely the killing of humans would also be 'ecologically sound' since there are obviously too many of us. I'm sure this killing could be very 'humane' — snared, shot, torn to bits by dogs, loaded on trucks and decapitated by sharp knives after having been frightened so that the blood gushes out more easily. Very humane. Humane killing means simply the way humans see fit to kill animals (including other humans). As for the

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element of 'sport', I'm sure the military and police force would love to arrange something.

So kind of Lanty to protect the lambs and poultry from being killed by other predators (as though humans are without doubt predators themselves) until the time comes when Lanty sees fit to kill them him/herself. What a kind protector of helpless animals (or more an attempt at being god).

The more I think about it, the more disgusted and saddened I am by Lanty's ideas, which seem more suited to a power-loving advocate of mutual struggle/predation than someone believing in mutual aid, compassion and anarchism. In peace and anarchy

TONY

Oxford

LANTY REPLIES

Dear FREEDOM,

Both Edward Johnson and Angus (Letters 16 October) are concerned that my views on animals, food and environment should not be taken as representing anarchist opinion in general.

I am fully aware that they do not.

Anarchist opinion (with some notable exceptions) is moulded by the same anthropomorphism and mawkish sentimentality that colours the thinking of English speaking society in general.

This is represented from Victorian times onward in such literature as the Beatrix Potter novels (Mrs Tiggywinkle et al), Wind in the Willows through to the present in Watership Down, and Disney cartoons. These tales and others like them are part of the culture which all of us in these islands have been conned by. They misrepresent other species and encourage us to see them in human terms.

We are encouraged to give our affection, love, nurturance and empathy to animals rather than other humans. Ever noticed how few people will be warm toward a stranger but will pet and make a fuss of his/her dog? It is pervasive, even anarchists do it.

Another myth, popular with the British upper middle class in Victorian and Edwardian times, is 'Man the Hunter', which emphasises the macho aspects of hunting and killing animals. Edward sees me as 'rejoicing' in this image. Let me say that I do not. We have rid ourselves of this myth, I would suggest that we rid ourselves of our anthropomorphism; it does us all, both animal and human, a great disservice.

Thus whales, seal pups and vivisection bound beagles get a lot of our concern. Crocodiles, long eared bats, vivisection bound rats get less; they are less human, less cuddly, though equally as important in their own habitat or able to feel pain.

To return to the letters of Edward and

Angus: it would seem that their strong feelings have impaired their intellect and senses. They variously ignore or misrepresent what I wrote and insinuate that I hold views which are not mentioned in my letter and cannot be deduced from it.

To answer their questions and criticisms: 1) Edward's first paragraph suggests that I indulged in a damaging logical reasoning process and also that I have failed to submit my feelings to analysis. How can logical reasoning be damaging? Rather, he should have observed that he could not accept my a priori value judgements. However, logic is often a poor tool in this matter — our dealings with animals often depend on instinct and emotion not logic.

The assumption that I have failed to analyse my feelings is untrue and can not be 'apparent' from my letter. Indeed, these letters are in part the result of making sense of what I feel to be true, even though it conflicts with the socially acceptable view.

The only simple answer is Veganism. If we choose to work with animals, to eat them, or interfere with their lives it is inevitable that we have conflicting feelings, emotions, instincts. Thus as a farm worker, I help animals to be born, I nurture them, treat their ailments and look after their wellbeing. I enjoy doing it. Then they are killed. Not enjoyable. Then I eat them. Enjoyable. My favourite animal, after the human, is the fox. I spend a lot of time observing them, their habits, distribution, diet; I find this pleasurable and fascinating.

Edward hints at the same sort of conflict when he writes of killing in an 'act of mercy'. (However, the mercy is only to himself, the animal always wants to stay alive — it is innate.)

2) Am I as hostile to mink farmers as the ALF? Only if they release mink into the wild or allow them to escape due to their mismanagement. Not that I support mink ranching, it is a waste of resources.

3) Does my area suffer much mink predation on poultry? Yes. There are no intensive poultry houses near here. Most houses and farms have a few hens in a pen or scratching about the yard. We lost 11 out of 25 and these poultry were so free range that they roosted up trees.

4) Edward suggests that we shouldn't eat vegetarian animals because they are harmless and that there would be poetic justice in eating wolves because they eat lambs. Unfortunately there have been no wolves here for 220 years, so I joined the foxes in eating vegetarians. I would suggest that Edward does not foist his notions of 'innocent' lambs and 'guilty' wolves upon the natural world, there is no morality in animals.

5) My views on the world food trade, ie that it should be kept to a minimum and that all communities should be self-sufficient in basic foodstuffs is branded as bourgeois, worthy of the Lab, Lib or

Ecology parties. Edward wishes to consider trade and distribution. He should study Labour party thinking on this matter, it sounds as though it may be similar to his own, viz. scrapping 'Food from our own Resources' and buying cheap on world markets, running down British agriculture to create a leisure playground of the countryside. Sounds like a triumph for urban middle class consumerism and international Capitalism, and even less hope for the Third World, starved of resources.

6) I am accused of killing for sport. I do not. There is always a good reason for my wishing to kill anything. But I sometimes make a sport out of pursuing game or predators and give them a chance. Many of our killing methods are too efficient, too indiscriminate, to give the creature a chance is more ecologically sound (natural selection and survival of the fittest etc). Also, some sporting methods are more humane.

7) Why do I restrict my care and solidarity to my own species? I don't, although my own species invariably comes first.

8) Why am I a speciesist? For the same reason I am a pacifist and an anarchist-communist, ie self interest. Like most humans my goals are to live, to maximize my freedom, my security and degree of community and to enjoy myself. If showing solidarity with other humans in the hope that they may show solidarity with me makes me akin to a racist, so be it, but I think Edward is playing with words. 9) Angus believes in basic rights for all creatures. (Why doesn't he look at the real world?) I believe in self interest. In practice our political and ecological stances are probably close.

Thus, I try not to cause pain to other creatures, not because it is somehow wrong to cause pain, but because it distresses me to cause pain.

Thus, I too mourn the extinction of the Large Blue in these islands because my environment is poorer, less interesting by its disappearance. I cannot eat Large Blues, they have no material value, but I regret that I will never see one.

10) Angus's attack on my suggestion for an anarchist morality (is self interest a morality?) is answered in my following paragraph where I state that in our own interest we should use our environment in a manner that is sustainable indefinitely and tends towards ecological balance. Why did Angus ignore this. Perhaps there is none so blind as will not see.

11) Finally, Angus rejoices in the fact that he can live on a varied vegetarian diet in Argyll which is a 'damn sight higher than Cumbria'. Excellent.

I think that the Argyll coastal areas with their mild climate and good supply of seaweed are among the few areas suitable for a Vegan agriculture. Unfortunately, population densities dictate that many must find a living in the hills.

LANTY

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literature

'The Bourgeois Role of Bolshevism'. Reprint of 1930 Guy Aldred pamphlet. 50p inc p+p from GPP Reprints, Box V2, 488 Gt Western Road, Glasgow G12

'Careless Talk' New North Staffs Newsheet. For a copy send 15½p large SAE to R Knight, c/o Students Union, The University, Keele, Staffs

WANTED: 'Ancient' issues of OZ, IT, ZERO, original or photocopies. Send a letter to PO Box 1937, Thision, Athens, Greece, and tell us how much you want to send them to us. We're also interested in other publications that are now defunct. (They are welcome in any language.)

'Take these Gospels. They'll give you sins. I can cure those'. Read 'THE PAGAN CAROLS RESTORED' £3.50 from Norman Iles, 381 Marine Rd, Morecambe, Lancs

NOV 5 and 6: Reading Anarchists will be hosting a Guy Fawkes celebration and meeting for groups and individuals in the area (to revive the Thames Valley Federation?). Contact Box 19, Acorn Bookshop, 17 Chatham St, Reading or ring Paul on Reading 52604 for details/ if you'd like to come.

Sunday 31/10/82
Discussion
'Capitalism can seriously damage your health'
The Health Workers' Dispute and the ending of the Sick Society.

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on Anarcho-Syndicalism:
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Each meeting starts at 1.00pm with a meal (£1.00) followed by a discussion at:

121 Anarchist Centre
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'Anarchism as a Way of Social Life' Course of six sessions, Monday evenings, 14 February - 21 March 1983, 8 - 10pm. Tutor: Nicolas Walter. Fee: £4.50 if resident in Inner London Education Authority area, £6.50 outside. Information from and applications to: Course 230, Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Square, London WC1.

Printed and Typeset by
Aldgate Press
84b Whitechapel High St,
01-247 3015

Distributed to Bookshops by
A Distribution
c/o 84b Whitechapel High St
London E1

Freedom Press

IN ANGEL ALLEY
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THESE conversations took place with Federica Montseny in 1976 at her home in Toulouse, where she still works for the CNT in exile. In the first chapter of her book she introduces herself and her ideology:

F M: My parents used to say that those people were mistaken who said that anarchist parents will have anarchist children, in the same way an apple tree will produce apples. My parents never tried to influence me ...

A(gusti) P(ons): So how did the political personality which later emerged develop inside you?

F M: That's a strange and rather complicated business. I was free to read whatever I wanted; I read a vast amount. It was from reading so much — (she says laughing) — that I did my eyes in (Federica wears very thick glasses). Slowly I started to learn about different ideas. First through my father's books. One of the things which influenced me a lot and which made me determined to agitate was the period of repression under Anido and Arlegui (governors of Barcelona who practised a ruthless 'pistolismo').

A P: When did the osmosis of anarchism and syndicalism take place?

F M: The merger stems from Bakunin. Bakunin is the man who says: to transform society a weapon, an instrument, is needed. And that weapon is the working class. And it was the followers of this idea who created revolutionary syndicalism in France and anarcho-syndicalism in Spain. But anarchists are anarchists and the anarchist view is not a class view. It's a universal point of view which embraces all humanity ... In France, the CGT was founded by anarchists. What happened was that when the great generation of anarchists disappeared, it let itself be invaded by reformists, who were socialists. Afterwards the communists, who had entered by force, gradually took over the positions of power; all that after the First War. But until 1906 or 1907 the CGT was strictly anarcho-syndicalist.

A P: The way the world is now, divided into two great blocs, where do you believe anarchist ideas can be realised more easily, in a capitalist society or in a society based on state capitalism?

F M: I won't risk saying anything for sure. But I believe

conversation with FREDERICA MONTSENY

EXTRACTS from *Conversations With Federica Montseny*
by Agusti Pons (Laia, Barcelona, 1977). Translated from
the Catalan by Matthew Tree.

I saw so many barbaric things! People who visited home and who I knew were murdered ...

A P: Tell me about your ideals.

F M: I believe you can't separate the problem of the liberation of Man from the anarchist revolutionary ideal. The word 'revolutionary' mustn't be understood simply as referring to an act of insurrection. There are revolutionary ideas, revolutionary concepts, revolutionary actions without that meaning that you go out onto the street with a pistol or a club. We are revolutionaries because we want to change existing customs: social revolution. Thus each militant has to be a veritable free man. One has to remember what humans tend to do. One thing is what one does and another what one is. That's the evil. It's also one of the reasons why many political figures have fallen from their pedestals: when people realised that their conduct didn't fit with the words which they preached or wrote. It's very important to do one's utmost to make one's conduct, life, person, harmonize with one's ideas. We still prefer the morality of the early Christians to the machiavellian and jesuitic morality of those who say: 'Do what I say, but not what I do'.

that despite everything in a capitalist society the range of possibilities for struggle is wider ... In a communist society there is no range at all because all is controlled, dominated and centralised in some way, so that the opposition can't speak, or do anything. I know that a capitalist society won't allow its power to be taken from it, above all economic power; it's had recourse to fascism, to war, and will continue to do so. But notwithstanding that, a libertarian revolution would be easier in a non-communist society than in a communist one. In communist countries there are no safety valves but in capitalist ones there are. It's one of the tactics of capitalism, the famous theory: 'Something must change so that nothing changes'. Bear in mind though, that there is no current regime in the world which so much as comes close to anarchist ideals.

A P: And the experiences of the Chinese peasant communes?

F M: There's something which is never mentioned: one of the universal thinkers who's been most translated into Chinese and who has had most influence among the Chinese people and the Chinese intelligentsia, has been Kropotkin. And, in certain ways, it has been

Kropotkin's libertarian-communist concepts which have been realised in a large section of the Chinese communes, despite the directives from Peking ... but we're still not talking about achievements in the sense we have of the word.

1933 Onwards

FREDERICA talks about the practical aspects of anarchist organisation when the CNT was at its most influential.

F M: In what we might call the organic structure we have local, county, regional and national federations. They* can for example destroy one regional federation, but the others remain, and even in the 'destroyed' federation, how can they destroy the local sections, small unions with an autonomous life, which get together again and make general decisions? All that is very difficult to destroy. And even if they succeeded, you have left what no political power can destroy: individuals, the spirit of initiative, stubborn spreading of propaganda. This has always existed and always will, because it's one of the characteristics of our functional mechanism and of our moral unity. That's why it's so difficult to destroy us! You can destroy a political party, for example the Communist Party, with greater ease. The Communist Party is run,



generally speaking, from top to bottom. If those at the bottom don't get their directives from the top, they end up paralyzed. Not us.

A P: But this flexibility must also make any united action very difficult.

F M: It does slow us up, as we often remind ourselves. In other parties and organisations congresses take place with everything prepared and digested. The members only have to say 'Fine. Bravo. I agree'. Not with us. Everything discussed in the congress has to have been discussed first in the small and big unions, in the various groups etc before it reaches the top. And the top, I repeat, is no more than the mandatar of everything that's been discussed. All that takes a while ...

A P: Moving on to the outbreak of civil war, is it true that the famous occupation of the factories was a 'grass roots' action and not the reverse?

F M: Yes, it is true. Anyone who says that the directives for the collectivisations came from some committee, is either lying, or he doesn't know how things really were. There was never anything so spontaneous, so from the heart of the workers, as the collectivisations, the occupation of terrain and the creation of the great cooperatives in Aragon, Valencia, Castile, and some of the Andalusian desmesnes which weren't

*eg the enemies of the CNT

occupied immediately by the fascist troops. The collectivisation developed from the will of the workers who came to an arrangement, who didn't wait for any committee to give them an order, not that any would have given them one because we at that time wanted only to put an end to fascism, to defeat it. That was our priority. The people made the revolution, on the spot, because it was the most natural thing in the world for them to say: 'Now is the moment, let's go ahead'. And they went ahead. This is something which many people won't understand, and yet it was just like that. Nothing is so spontaneous, nothing comes so naturally from the wishes of the producers as industrial and agricultural collectivisations ... One of the unions which functioned the best and the most rapidly was the transport union, and also, the railway union. The latter immediately took into its own hands the entire network of railways which had remained in Republican hands, and there was no delay whatsoever. The same thing happened with public transport in Barcelona. The lads who made themselves responsible for it were very efficient. And in the textile industry, on the 21st and 22nd July when they said 'Let's go to work', why, it started up very quickly. In my opinion the other great 'tour de force' was in food distribution.



They found the market in the Placa del Born full of products which were going rotten, with peasants arriving with more food to sell and not knowing what to do with it, and immediately that was organised, food was distributed district by district rapidly and efficiently. All together it demonstrated what we've said so many times: those who dislike worker's organisation, 'grass roots' organisation, don't realise that that kind of organisation, in the first moments of the revolution, is a formidable instrument for getting everything going and for passing from a capitalist economy to an economy directed and controlled by the workers ...

The Future

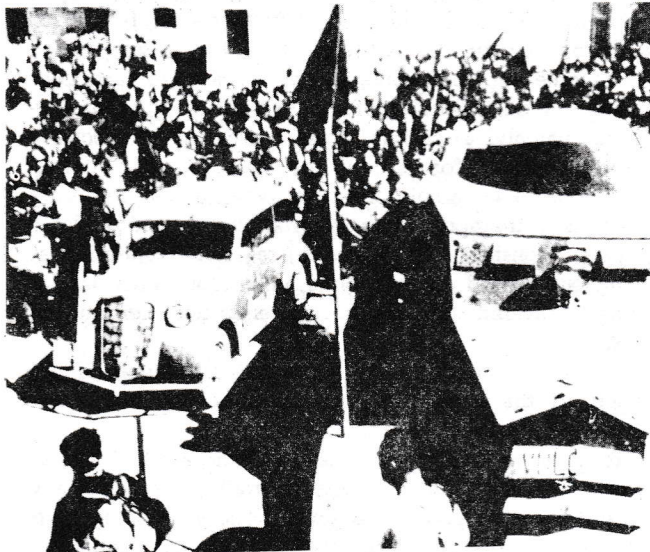
FREDERICA describes the possibilities for anarchism.

F M: I'm an optimist. I won't say along with that great philosopher of ours, Giovanni Bovio: 'Thought is anarchic and history is moving towards anarchy', but I'm convinced that we are the reserve ideological force. When everything else has failed, we'll remain. State communism has failed, the Russian experience has been a disaster; people are turning away from it. Socialism for its part has been slowly adapting itself and has turned itself really into the managing director

of capitalist society. We are the last hope for a substitute for this world which capitalism has forged since the French revolution ... Once again we are taking root, it's necessary. One proof of what I'm saying lies in the events of May 1968. One fine day anarchists started appearing everywhere. Cohn Bendit, for example, whom noone had heard of. Everyone was talking about the cooperatives started in Spain during the Civil War. Our companions in the CNT were in great demand, during that French May. A little book called 'L'anarchisme' sold out three editions in a fortnight.

A P: Don't you think that the anarcho-sindicalist movement in general has been too much guided by a moral puritanism and sentimentalism, and that it's been too inflexible when faced with situations demanding a change of tactics?

F M: On the contrary we believe that it is thanks to this intransigence, thanks to this faith in anarcho-sindicalist principles, to the line fixed by the First International, thanks to all that that we persist despite occasional failures whereas other movements disappear. We've said many times, and today men like Noam Chomsky are acknowledging it, that the only thing we've done wrong is to have been right fifty years too soon.



Many of the things we said, other people are saying them today. All that we urged regarding direct action, or birth control, for example, are now part of daily language and practice ...

A P: Don't you think that one of the great historical errors of anarcho-sindicalism has been to make the destruction of the State a prime objective instead of leaving it as one of the last objectives to achieve?

F M: No. For a very simple reason. If it's only the last objective, then it's also the last objective of the communists, who say: 'In time, the State will be relegated to the attic'. We begin with the premise: any revolution which doesn't destroy the State and which doesn't substitute government by people with the administration of things, is lost. Yet again the same malign forces will emerge which have emerged now in the society in which we live. Inevitably, as long as class or caste division has a chance of returning, as long as there are forces at the service of a supreme power, the State, (and the communist State is even worse than the democratic State, because it's an all powerful State, a kind of new god, deaf to any kind of appeal); as long as all that persists, the revolution is lost. The effort is useless ...

GANDHI and KAUNDA

Gandhi. A Memoir by William L Shirer. Abacus, 1981, £1.75.

Kaunda on Violence by Kenneth D Kaunda. Sphere Books, 1982, £1.50.

BOTH of these books attest, in different ways, to the extraordinary influence of that skinny, rather ugly little Hindu – Churchill's 'half-naked fakir' – M K Gandhi, who masterminded the Indian struggle for national liberation. Of the two books, Shirer's is the more conventional. As a young foreign correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune*, Shirer covered the Gandhi-Irwin talks of 1931 and the Round Table Conference held later in London. Although the assignment led to a warm friendship between the journalist and the Indian leader, this seems a slender basis for writing yet another book on Gandhi. Shirer tacitly admits as much by adding to his eye-witness account chapters dealing with Gandhi's earlier and later career. The book, as one might expect from a journalist of Shirer's reputation, is highly readable, but it adds little to what may be found in other products of 'the Gandhi industry' (amounting to date to some 1,000 books in English alone). What the book provides, rather, is yet further testimony to Gandhi's undoubted – and genuine – charisma. His days with Gandhi, Shirer now tells us, were 'the most fruitful' of his life: 'No other experience was as inspiring and as meaningful and as lasting.' Clearly, Shirer thinks that Gandhi, despite his many frailties, was a saint, a man akin to Buddha and to Christ. In judging him thus, Shirer joins the company of many others, including Einstein and Mountbatten, whose verdicts are quoted as epigraphs in the book. But, as Shirer makes clear, Gandhi was also a shrewd and highly effective politician. Saints are rare, but saints who are effective politicians are rarer still. It is, of course, this combination of qualities which accounts for much of the continued fascination with Gandhi.

It is all the more interesting, therefore, that one of the themes discussed in Kaunda's book is 'the saint versus the politician' – of which more anon. I must confess that I approached the reading of this book with some prejudice, which was deepened by the egotism of the title and the wording of the blurb, which runs: 'Kenneth Kaunda, President of Zambia, devout Christian, devotee of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, led his country to independence through a campaign based on nonviolence. But, soon after Zambia's independence, the long and bitter struggle for majority rule in neighbouring Rhodesia caused the President to change his mind about violence ... Dr Kaunda explains the agonies and dilemmas he suffered and how he was forced to abandon the attitudes of a lifetime and accept the inevitability of armed struggle ...' I anticipated some time-serving, patently hypocritical apologia, laced with a liberal dose of pious theologising. As it turned out, however, I found these thoughts of Kaunda on violence – collected and edited by Colin Morris – both interesting and stimulating. They are the thoughts of a sensitive and intelligent man who is remarkably free from cant. It is difficult to think of any other contemporary leader of a state, certainly not any recent leader in this country, who could match the intellectual and human qualities that Kaunda displays here.

INTERNATIONAL CORESPONDENCE

OPEN LETTER ON OUR SPLIT FROM UNDERCURRENTS/MINUS

IC (see note 5 on our organizational nature) is a recent split from the Hong Kong group *Undercurrents/People's Press*, formerly *Minus/70's*, (the former of both being the group's international English newsletter and the latter its local press). (1)

Over the past several years we have experienced differences with its traditional anarchist/libertarian-communist current (referred to as the traditional current below). These differences occur both in theory and in practice. While both kinds of difference are equally important, viewing in retrospect, the theoretical differences provided the basis and background, while the difference in practice provided the 'immediate' cause of our split.

1. Theory: as those who have read the group's press well know, the traditional current derives its theory from anarchism and Cardanism. At one time, we were also heavily influenced by the latter. However, as we developed politically, we moved further and further away from it to eventually rejecting it entirely. Here, for reasons which will become apparent immediately, we wish to particularly mention our rejection of the two main pillars of Cardanism, namely, a) defining classes in terms of executive power/authority, (for us now, the 'only scientific' definition is Marx's economic criterion, because it is the 'only materialistic method', Marx, *Capital*, vol 1, p 352, fn 2, Progress Publishers, 1974) and b) regarding capitalism as having superseded its economic inner contradictions, as having 'delivered the goods' (an empiricist critique of Marxism).

The importance of these theoretical differences is not limited to the level of theoretical understanding. They, naturally, have direct bearing on practice.

Firstly, since it is now the 'leaders' who are the class to be overthrown, it follows quite naturally, then, that any anti-authoritarian practice is revolutionary, *no matter* its stand on capitalist (in Marx's meaning) property (relations of production). (The traditional current, of course, also view the latter's abolition as almost as important as the abolition of power/authority, but we cannot see how it must logically follow from it). It is, therefore, no accident that we should find its members giving tacit or open support to, participating in or even initiating struggles against nuclear power, state oppression (2), etc, *for what they are*. For our part, we are also against nuclear power (at its present level of technology), state oppression, etc. But, for us, these questions lose all revolutionary content if not stated in the context of the struggle against capitalism (in Marx's meaning). For this reason, even if their avowed ultimate aim is the overthrow of capitalism (in Marx's meaning), compared to direct struggles against it, they are of secondary importance. Purely anti-authoritarian struggles of this sort similarly scarcely need to be given a damn for, except that they serve to derail the proletarian struggle.

Secondly, by regarding capitalism as having 'delivered the goods', reformism and what the Trotskyists call 'progressive' practice are, therefore, not so many weapons of the bourgeoisie, but are only 'misdirection' within the camp of the proletariat (or 'led'). They are, therefore, often tolerated, supported, passively or actively, or even initiated by members of the traditional current, as being



'steps taken towards the same end', if only circuitously. Thus we find them capable of cooperating and collaborating with unionists, Trotskyists, clergymen.....(3).

This brings us to the differences in practice.

2. Practice: as far as we are concerned, both for reasons of revolutionary principle and 'practicality', the dialectical unity between theory and practice is a principle that must be resolutely defended both in theory and in practice. In other words, for us, any sacrifice of theoretical positions in practice, for alleged 'practical' reasons (which are in fact not at all practical in the sense that such sacrifice does and can not lead to the supposed ends — we are thinking of Lenin's *Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder*), is opportunistic.

To our regret, we have observed that such cases have frequency. As we have said, members of the traditional current often cooperate and collaborate with unionists, etc, without a blink of the eye, although they are, in theory, deadly enemies against all forms of reformism and 'progressive' practice.

A second, somewhat less important, difference in practice is the traditional current's drift in the last half-decade or so towards almost total concentration on spectacle (the creation of spectacles for appreciation) in their activities at the expense of unspectacular concrete political work. Thus we find its members putting almost all their efforts into experimenting with political cinema, political theatre, international sticker campaign against CCP's oppression of Chinese dissidents, etc. We by no means denounce these activities categorically, although they must also be subject to what's been said in the above. (4) But if they are coupled with an almost total absence of work such as interventions in the developments of the class struggle (leafletting, intervening in strikes, etc), addressing important issues of the class struggle (the role of 'Solidarity', for example), developing one's understanding of revolutionary theory and practice (instead of empty regurgitating the same old slogans), etc, then these activities cease to be activities of a revolutionary group, acquire an autonomy of their own, the purpose and direction of which is the projection of a hollow image.

It is not that we have never committed the same mistakes. On the contrary, it is only as a result of our own political development that we have come to realize them for what they are.

We have also tried to bridge these differences through mutual struggle. Unfortunately, there has never been a healthy tradition, within the traditional current, of criticism (something not unrelated to its obsession with spectacle). Such words have long ago been abolished in the libertarian dictionary.

IC (5) hold positions extremely close to the following, if not exactly these already.

1. That the so-called 'Socialist' countries are but a particular expression of capitalism, neither 'degenerated workers' states' nor a 'new form' of class society.

2. That all trade unions (including 'Solidarity'), whatever the subjective intentions of their members, are objectively counter-revolutionary in nature in 20th century capitalism.

3. That, likewise, the so-called 'workers' parties (the 'C'Ps, 'S'Ps and their left-wing appendages) are equally reactionary capitalist state apparatuses.

4. That any form of 'minimum programme' type of participation in the capitalist system or any type of 'using' it in practice for 'revolutionary' ends is reactionary and opportunistic. All factions of the bourgeoisie are today equally reactionary, any tactic calling for 'tactically' cooperating with any such faction can only serve to send the workers to the capitalist guillotine.

5. All so-called 'national liberation struggles' can only be absorbed into the inter-imperialist massacre. To support such 'struggles' (whether 'critically' or however) amounts to supporting one imperialist against another.

6. The proletarian revolution cannot be 'organized' in any way by revolutionary minorities. It can only be carried out by the generalized uprising of the proletariat itself. The role of revolutionary minorities, as the class's vanguard, consists of ceaselessly intervening in this struggle's intensification, generalization and internationalization. The substance of this intervention is the drawing of lessons and conclusions from the class's past and present struggle experience, and basing upon these conclusions, to point out the direction the struggle should take to achieve the communist revolution. Only in this way can past errors not be repeated, the struggle not be side-tracked into reactionary blind-alleys and the struggle be extended/generalized.

7. Capitalism is in a state of permanent crisis in the 20th century. The proletarian revolution has since the first great wave of 1917 — 23 been on the agenda, on which depends the ultimate destiny of mankind: Socialism or barbarism.

Because of our very limited ranks and resources, in the short term, we will not be able to put out any regular publication. As said in note 5, the purpose of our formation is to broaden deep discussions of communist positions in this part of the world. This we plan to do by establishing and maintaining close contact and dialogue with the international revolutionary milieu, in particular its communist currents. The form of this 'deep discussion' cannot, of course, be purely intellectual/theoretical, but can only be carried out through concrete political practice, ie active intervention in the proletarian class struggle.

July 16, 1982.

Communist Greetings
IC

Notes:

1. a) Undercurrents/People's Press address is: 5 Holly Road, Mid-Garage, Ground floor, Happy Valley, Hong Kong. b) What's being said in the following about the 70's/Minus is only meant to apply to its later years. c) We have thought of expressing our differences with the group in a less open and direct way, but later thought we had the political responsibility to be as clear as possible in the matter. We can only hope our former comrades will not take to heart some of the hard words being used.
2. For example, in cooperation with other local activists, they recently distributed a leaflet at cinemas showing the Costa Gavras film *Missing* which contains a straightforward condemnation of the recent refusal by the Hong Kong government to extend the work permit for an American lawyer who worked for a local reformist organization, without making any further statement of positions on the matter.
3. Their recent negotiations with some social-democrats and clergymen for venues to perform their political theatre 1984.1997 are examples.
4. We wonder how such films can be screened and plays performed, except during mass uprisings, without some form of cooperation with established unions, leftist organizations, etc.
5. IC does not view itself as a permanently constituted grouping. On the one hand, for reasons already mentioned, we find it no longer possible to work with Undercurrents/People's Press. On the other, though we are moving towards communist positions, we think it premature to join existing communist groups. Thus, we see ourselves, rather, as being a transitional grouping, the purpose of which is to act as a rallying point to deepen discussion on communist positions in this part of the world which has so far been disastrously cut off from communist currents in Europe and America (see also last part of main body of letter).

PS In 1978, after visiting the 70's in Hong Kong, the American situationist Ken Knabb wrote a critique of the group entitled *A Radical Group in Hong Kong* (we still have a copy on file). Despite our vastly differing positions, we find most of Knabb's criticisms well-founded. In the libertarian tradition of aversion to critique, anti-critique and self-critique (about which even Bakunin must turn in his grave), the 70's never 'cared' to reply. (Some of the group's overseas contacts even wrote to the group expressing their disgust at Knabb's doing so!)

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Absence of cant and commendable clarity is displayed, for example, in Kaunda's discussion of a statement quoted from 'a German thinker' (probably Max Weber): 'He who affirms the state, affirms violence.' 'So far as I know', observes Kaunda, 'no state has managed to survive for long without the use of compulsion, including if necessary, violence.' And he continues: 'Some people draw a comforting distinction between "force" and "violence". They define "violence" as the improper use of "force", and "force" as "violence sanctioned by the law". I refuse to cloud the issue with such word-play. Anything which hurts a human being is violence, and there is no point in beating about the bush. With some exceptions, the power which establishes a state is violence; the power which maintains it is violence; the power which eventually overthrows it is violence — or if you prefer a nicer word "force".' An anarcho-pacifist could hardly have put it better!

Hypocrisy does figure in the book, but it is not Kaunda's: it is the hypocrisy of others, notably those who preach non-violence to the oppressed blacks of Southern Africa but who are fully prepared to use violence themselves, when the issues they hold dear are at stake. One of the more glaring examples of hypocritical double-think cited by Kaunda was the Wilson Government's refusal to use 'lawful violence' against the usurpation of British sovereignty by Ian Smith's regime in Rhodesia — a refusal which, since it was signalled in advance, encouraged the declaration of UDI. Instead of using 'force', the British Government sought a 'nonviolent' solution through negotiations backed up by economic sanctions. On this whole disgraceful episode Kaunda comments, tellingly: 'We Zambians were baffled by the involved logic and crazy ethics of a British Government which first of all invited us as a nation to accept severe economic hardship in bearing the brunt of sanctions against Rhodesia. This same government then connived ... at breaches of the oil embargo by companies, one of which it owns. This faithful ally then sat back and watched the Rhodesian war machine fueled by this oil exterminate black freedom fighters who were doing Britain's job for her. And Rhodesian jets, also fueled by this oil, regularly bombed Britain's ally Zambia whilst the British Government did nothing except wag a finger at Mr Smith and tell him what a naughty boy he was. A naughty boy he assuredly was, but he is also — white boy ... so what is a little matter of treason and murder between kith and kin? This is the message which comes across loud and clear to us, mocking our efforts to banish racism from the continent of Africa.' Recent events have served only to underline the point that Kaunda makes. Contrast the attitude of most British politicians, including Wilson, to Galtieri's usurpation of British sovereignty in the Falklands!

Clarity of thought combined with political realism also enables Kaunda to direct some barbed arrows into the hides of 'progressives', both pacifists and violent revolutionaries. To the latter he points out: 'revolution has become the intellectually acceptable form of modern war'; the six conditions of 'a just war' reduce in practice to one: a just war is one fought by my side, and an unjust war is fought by yours; the fashionable tendency to idealize revolution cannot disguise the hideous reality of revolutions; the most effective revolutions of our century have not placed left-wing but, rather, fascist regimes in power; and, though it is necessary to discriminate in judging those who use violence, black violence is not of a different order from white violence. To those pacifists who trot out the cliché that 'war never settles anything', Kaunda responds, tartly: 'Show me the kraal of Shaka Zulu or introduce me to the Governor-General of Portuguese East Africa or tell me how the Third Reich is getting along.' It is no answer for pacifists to counter this by suggesting that war only replaces one tyranny by another. Not all tyrannies are equally tyrannical and, even if they were, most people would prefer to be dragooned by their own kind than by aliens. If wars survive, suggests Kaunda, it is because human beings have found

them the most effective way of dealing with certain problems. One of the functions of war, he adds, is 'to redefine power relationships which have become blurred; to test out how far the writ of disputing parties really runs' — a function neatly exemplified in the recent armed conflict between Britain and Argentina.

Nonviolence, Kaunda further suggests, is not an alternative policy to war. 'Nonviolence is not a policy at all. It is the refusal to accept a specific policy, force, as a solution to certain problems. The disciple of nonviolence is announcing that he will not go up that road which leads to the battlefield, and this can be a costly and courageous thing to do. But his decision has no bearing on the issues which are being fought out on the battlefield. It is what the pacifist does next that counts. Only then can he be taken seriously because he is beginning to form an alternative policy rather than express his abhorrence to one which exists.'

At one level, this point against the pacifist is well made. And in the context which concerns Kaunda most closely — the liberation of the blacks in Southern Africa — it is certainly true that pacifists have not so far come up with a nonviolent strategy that looks at all convincing when set beside the strategy of armed struggle — the strategy which, as we now know, was 'effective' in Zimbabwe. But, at a deeper level, Kaunda's observations in this passage, as in several others, betray his limited understanding of nonviolence, particularly of Gandhian nonviolence. Indeed, so much is this the case that one is puzzled to understand how he could ever have once thought of himself as 'a devotee of Mahatma Gandhi'.

No devotee of Gandhi, for example, could suggest, as Kaunda does in the passage just quoted, that nonviolence is essentially a negative concept (even if the form of the word is such). On the contrary, in Gandhian thought, nonviolence is pre-eminently a positive concept, encapsulating no mere policy but a whole philosophy of life — a philosophy in which truth is the lodestar and which is characterised by the attitude of love (in the sense of good will) towards all others, including one's adversaries. Gandhian nonviolence certainly implies a refusal to take the violent road but it also implies taking active steps to resist oppression. Gandhi himself would undoubtedly have agreed that, having abjured violence, it is 'what one does next that counts'. So much did he emphasise this need to take positive action that he always insisted that violence was preferable to cowardly passivity.

In abandoning, however reluctantly, his former pacifism, it seems evident that Kaunda has abandoned a rather old-fashioned, if still extant, form of pacifism. That his view of pacifism is old-fashioned is suggested by his tendency to equate pure pacifism with the Christian doctrine of non-resistance and with his use of the term 'passive resistance' rather than the more modern and less misleading term 'nonviolent resistance' or the specifically Gandhian term *satyagraha* (coined because Gandhi wanted to distinguish it from passive resistance).

The conclusive proof that Kaunda was never much of a devotee of Gandhi is contained in the words 'President of the Republic of Zambia'. Kaunda may claim that the United National Independence Party adopted 'nonviolence' as its official policy and that the final stages of the freedom struggle in Zambia were conducted according to Gandhian principles of nonviolence, but the claim should be treated with scepticism. A policy of tax refusal, non-recognition of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and even preparations for a freedom march into Northern Rhodesia by the short-lived World Peace Brigade (a march that was called off when the UNIP decided to participate in elections) do not add up to a Gandhian policy of nonviolence. Any real devotee of Gandhi should know that the most significant fact in Gandhi's career as the leader of the Indian national liberation movement was that he did not

become the head of the new Indian state. He deliberately chose not to accept any official position; when independence day arrived, he was not present at the celebrations in New Delhi but was engaged in a campaign to quell communal violence between Hindus and Muslims; he advised his followers to keep out of corrupting party politics; and, on the eve of his assassination, in the last thing he wrote, he proposed that the Indian National Congress should be dissolved and, in its place, should be formed an association for the service of the people, the aim of which would be to bring 'real independence' to the villagers of India. Gandhi adopted this stance because he believed that getting rid of *alien* rulers was only a necessary first step in a nonviolent revolution whose ultimate goal was getting rid of *all* rulers, so that India would become, not a modern nation-state but a society of genuinely self-governing village republics. Gandhi understood clearly that, in one of its central aspects, the state was, as he put it, 'organised violence'; thus, for a proponent of nonviolence to accept state office and to engage in 'state-building' was inherently contradictory. To the extent that Gandhi was a 'saint' and, at the same time, also an effective 'politician', it was because the politics he took part in was the politics of opposition, not the politics of government.

So, when Kaunda cogitates on the theme of 'the saint versus the politician', and suggests that the role of the former is to bear uncompromising witness to certain fundamental truths while the role of the latter is to act 'effectively', recognising harsh realities and the unavoidable need to use violent means, he is not basically at odds with Gandhi's position on the general relationship — although he begs the question of what is 'reality' and what acting 'effectively' means. The real difference between Kaunda and Gandhi is that the latter, understanding all the implications of nonviolence, chose not to become a conventional politician but sought to pioneer a new kind of politics. Kaunda cannot plead that he was not clearly confronted with such a choice. An Indian member of the World Peace Brigade, Kaunda tells us, once appealed to him to 'resign all political offices ... and spread the gospel of *satyagraha* by preaching and example'. (If the Indian used the latter phrase, the language was misleading, since Gandhian action is not *simply* preaching and setting an example.) The appeal caused Kaunda a couple of days of mental torment but, in the end, he concluded that the Indian was mistaken: 'The people had asked me to lead them ... I did not see how I could abandon them, only to appear as the servant of a higher destiny, urging them to a more excellent way as they milled about in confusion!' In other words, and less kindly, Kaunda's own political ambitions and his elitist assumption that the people needed leadership, *his* leadership, prompted him not to choose Gandhi's way.

As anarchists, we might leave it at that. But Kaunda, in attempting to justify his choice, makes an observation which has also been made about Gandhians in contemporary India, such as the late Jayaprakash Narayan: 'If a good man in politics quits the field, he leaves the more cynical of the breed to do as they like.' When politicians of the ilk of Idi Amin have been around in Africa — and not only in Africa — one can see the point. But the excuse will still not do. The 'good man' does not quit the field of politics but only one area of the field — the dirty area in which conventional politicians make their fortunes while covering themselves in filth. And the 'good man' does not, or should not, leave the more cynical of the breed to do as they like. The 'good man' continues with his special kind of politics, bearing in mind Gandhi's observation: 'Real Swaraj (self-rule) will come, not by the acquisition of authority by the few, but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it is abused.'

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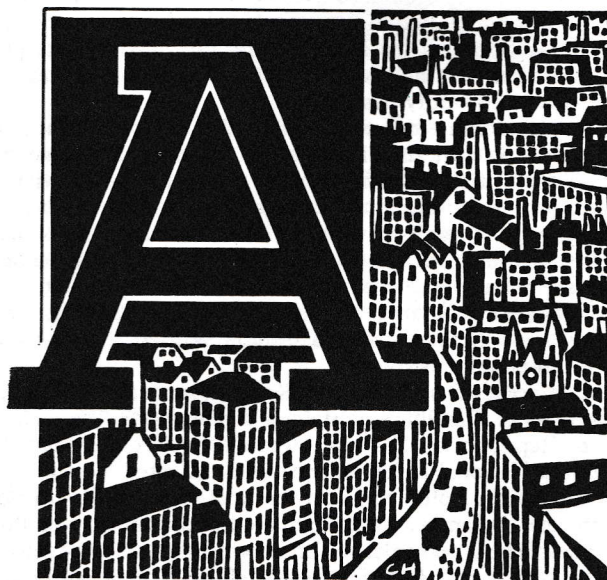
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